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Historical Commission Minutes 07-03-2001

**Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday,
3 July 2001
Whittemore-Robbins House, 7:30 PM**

Call to Order: Robert Botterio presiding, with commissioners Pam Meister, Patrick Guthrie, Michael Ruderman, and the newly-appointed commissioner Eric Stange.

Review of minutes of 5 June 2001: correcting "past chair" to "past commissioner" in reference to Richard Duffy, approved.

Communications, from Mr. Botterio:

Owners of 27 Brantwood would like to rebuild a front porch to match the existing porch, a project deemed not to exceed the 25% threshold of the overall facade, and will not require a hearing.

Regarding the Capitol Theater, Mr. Botterio conveyed the commission's approval of window changes to the office of the Building Inspector.

Mr. Guthrie sent Mr. Botterio a copy of letter that he had originally addressed to the owners of 1107 Massachusetts Avenue, regarding the progress of restoring replacement-sash windows to wooden sashes.

Dr. Claude Fontaine, DMD, of 251 Massachusetts Avenue inquired about replacing windows at his home/office building. Mr. Botterio informed him, after discussing the project, that its scope would require a hearing and a decision-so arranged for August 7 at 8:00pm.

Responding to an inquiry from its owners about the garage at 17 Oak Knoll, changes or demolition will require a hearing, according to Mr. Guthrie.

Richard Bento, director of the department of Public Works, informs us that his office has contracted with a sign painter who can begin working on our requests for historic markers.

Review of Projects

125 Brattle Lane/Farmer's Lane (Colonial Ridge LLC) 11/99: Robinson-no change from before.

1167 Mass. Ave. (Mirak) 9/00: Guthrie-letter of inquiry as above.

23 Maple Street (Town of Arlington) 11/00: Robinson, Guthrie-no work apparent, even though Court Street architects has been engaged for four months.

45 Fairview Avenue (Trvalik) 12/00: Botterio-no activity.

19 Winter Street (McGlashing) 2/01: Ruderman-still no cornerboard; will write letter asking about work and completion status.

9 Brantwood Road (Stainton) 5/01: Botterio-the homeowners have decided to proceed with only the renovations to the existing home, and omit the addition that had been approved.

Demolitions Pending

7 and 5 Brattle Court (Freedom Development): August 1 and November 8, 2001 respectively: Redevelopment Board voted its "50% approval" at its hearing of June 11 for the office building to be sited here. At that meeting, plans were mentioned for removing one or both of these existing homes, utilizing the Minuteman Trail bikepath.

962 Massachusetts Avenue (Rita Yegian, owner): November 8, 2001-no information.

Reports

Whittemore-Robbins House (and outbuildings): Carey-see the discussion below.

Arlington Civic Block Garden: Robinson-no news.

Updates and Expansion to Inventory: Meister, Guthrie, Stange-awaiting the list of addresses profiled last week in Mr. Duffy's presentation.

Inventory of public buildings: Stange and Robinson-no activity.

Education/Outreach: Stange, Botterio-no activity.

Massachusetts Avenue (Osco): Robinson-Land Court has rendered a decision in favor of defendant Arlington's denying the construction of an Osco Pharmacy on this site. Plaintiffs still have a window in which to file an appeal. This commission concurs in the opinion of the Building Inspector that the condition of the structure warrants the use of the Building Inspector's emergency powers to order a demolition.

Affordable Housing Task Force: Stange-no report.

Zoning By-Law Review Committee: Meister-no news.

Historic Districts Commission: awaiting correspondent.

Old Burying Ground survey and assessment-Robinson-no activity.

Preservation Fund-Mr. Guthrie has been in contact with them.

Grants (Surveys and Planning): Guthrie, Stange-next cycle for state grants is fall for application, disbursement in Spring 2002.

February 2002 Event: "Murder of Dr. Parkman" broadcast-on schedule.

Town Day September 14-to be arranged at the next meeting.

New Business

8:00 pm Formal Hearing: 12 Orvis Road (Antonio Bento, owner) There was a considerable discussion with Mr. Lincoln Bento (appearing for his father Antonio Bento) about balancing the economy of a long-term maintenance solution with the commission's mandate to preserve the integrity of the this structure's architectural details. Of particular interest, in this home, are the flaring "middle belt" at the joining of the first and second stories, and the rounded bays at the corners; these details are often compromised or destroyed when flat lengths of vinyl siding are applied. The compromise motion was made by Mr. Guthrie, seconded by Ms. Meister, and unanimously approved: to allow the covering of the shingled surface with 'deluxe siding' (according to the examples furnished at this hearing) of color to match the existing wooden trim; no part of the front porch, the soffits, the trim of the doors and windows to be covered." Mr. Ruderman will monitor the work.

8:30 pm Whittemore-Robbins Carriage House repairs (Patsy Kramer) Work on the carriage house (built before the 1890 relocation of the main house and outbuildings back from the Avenue, for the 1892 construction of Robbins Library) has consumed about \$4000 to date. For that sum, we have learned the building is unsound to the point of condemnation. Ms. Kraemer distributed copies of a proposal for structural engineering services by Weidner Associates of Arlington. They estimate that their offer to "design shoring for the roof, second floor, and walls" and the "preparation of structural shoring drawings" will run about \$5400. Ms Kraemer recommended, and the commission concurred in authorizing this work. Financing for the extraordinary costs of the carriage house repairs may be available from the Nathan Robbins House Maintenance Fund (town-invested account no. 816).

9:00 pm 339 Mystic Street (Mr. Avo Asdourian, AIA) This meeting was a courtesy of Mr. Asdourian, who is designing the mansion which will replace the present home at this address. It is not an inventoried structure, but it abuts one, and Mr. Asdourian was gracious enough to apprise us on the plans of the owners (M/M Hassam Irqsus), and how he intends to make the new building as sympathetic to its surroundings as a structure of its scale can be.

Commissioners agreed to the following schedule of meetings for the second half of 2001: Tuesdays August 7, September 4, and October 2; Wednesday November 7 (to avoid Election Night the 6th); and adjourned at 10:00 pm.

For the Arlington Historical Commission,
A. Michael Ruderman, Commissioner